

Respected Committee Members,

I am Dr. Henry Lee, former Chief Criminalist at the State Forensic Science Laboratory, and former Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Safety. I have been an educator at the University of New Haven since 1975, where I am now Professor Emeritus, and I am the founder and vice president of the Henry C. Lee Institute of Forensic Science.

I am writing this letter to express my concern and my support for independent, local Public Access TV and Public, Educational and Government Access (PEG) programming. These shows, such as the Pete Mezzetti Show, are important to the people of Connecticut. These programs cover topics and discussions on many topics that are of interest, such as local news, meeting coverage, community events, and activities. The importance of these programs was made very clear during the COVID19 pandemic, when many could not or were concerned about venturing out. PEGs kept them informed and connected to their communities.

While demand has increased during the past few years, funding for these critical resources has declined. Many people are no longer subscribing to cable services and are streaming their programming. Without the help of the legislature to support PEGs like the Pete Mezzetti show, and to restructure funding mechanisms, Connecticut residents may lose their access to unfiltered, reliable programming run by and for the community.

I am aware that there are numerous demands placed on the funds available to the state. But PEGs provide important town government, educational, and public interest content. I thoroughly support the request to create legislation to change the language written and reviewed by the OLR that addresses the fee by subscriber model to fee for subscriber. Providers who sell cable or internet services to customers in Connecticut should pay a PEG fee to prevent significant negative consequences. It is so important to give Pete Mezzetti and others what they need to provide this service to the communities of Connecticut.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Henry C. Lee

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Pete Mezzetti

Pete Mezzetti

Community Access Host and Producer, the Pete Mezzetti Show

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